

to be just that, with ever greater rejection of drugs and a preference for alternative medicine." The essence of this work of just over 100 pages is carried in three chapters on migraine, cluster headache and "daily chronic headache". These chapters follow the usual pattern of past well-established works, describing clinical features and a variety of pharmacological and biochemical research. They reflect much of the admirable work of the Italian school, leaning heavily on the attempts to classify headache by prolactin responses, by endorphin deficiencies in the CSF and by the therapeutic response to tryptophan. In a small book a comprehensive review of the literature is impossible, but though many good papers are cited here, there are some serious omissions if this is to be used as a primary source of reference.

Taxonomy, the attempt to order or classify the headache syndromes is a major preoccupation. Previous classifications are justly criticised, but the attempt to divide the clinical groups on the basis of "neuroendocrine" tests, though admirable in conception, will predictably fail the clinician. Existing clinical terms are at times confused; the authors use prodrome when many of us would use aura, and the real prodromal phase of mood and vegetative symptoms is not distinguished. "Daily Chronic Headache" is substituted for tension or muscle contraction headache, and this is a fair description if the term is deliberately widened to include traumatic head pain and pains referred from the cervical spine. Post-traumatic headache is considered at greater length than tension headache, and a slightly pretentious "neuroendocrine approach" is submitted, though curiously, there is little importance or emphasis placed on factitious pain, malingering or hysterical conversion.

I found the book easy to read, and the publishers are congratulated on an attractive format, liberally illustrated with tables and graphs set on a yellow background. Some of these bear a typeset far too small, but most are of pleasing appearance and complement the text.

I enjoyed this book and would recommend it to trained neurologists and physicians. Its attention to current research and new lines of thought in migraine is refreshing, but it is not a comprehensive, nor a balanced account to present to a trainee. In the end the infuriating enigma of migraine drives us back to a nice quotation in the Foreword, attributed to A Soulaïrac: "La sensation de la douleur est essentiellement un phénomène d'intégration nerveuse supérieure."

JMS PEARCE

Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry/IV (4th Ed). Edited by Harold I Kaplan and Benjamin J Sadock. (Pp 2054; £132.00.) London: Williams & Wilkins, 1985.

This large and costly book is described in the foreword as constituting "a thorough and complete introduction to clinical psychiatry, sufficiently comprehensive to prepare an American post-graduate student for his examinations in psychiatry". To meet this objective it contains sections (almost textbooks in their own right) on the biological sciences relevant to psychiatry, and on psychology, neurology, the socio-cultural sciences, experimental method and psychodynamic theory. These occupy the first 500 pages, the remaining 1,500 pages being given to clinical adult and child psychiatry. It is published as part of a series which includes a somewhat smaller synopsis of the Comprehensive Textbook and a study guide and self-examination review of the synopsis.

The underlying purpose of the publication of the first (1967) edition was to correct "the pathetic overselling of psychiatry which had taken place in the 1960s" by indicating that psychiatry had a definite scientific basis and was limited in its scope by clear boundaries. There was, in addition, an important subliminal message contained in its emphasis on clinical syndromes. The fourth edition is described as no longer needing to be so defensive, and as a result has been reduced in size "to make that statement with clarity and dignity".

To assess the scope and quality of a book of this size is difficult, particularly when it is written for a practice of psychiatry and an examination system different from ours, even though those differences are becoming less. It is very hard to maintain tight editing of such a mammoth enterprise and inevitably contributions are of varying standards. Certainly the inclusion of a section on clinical neurology seems of doubtful value to us because of its brevity and lack of emphasis on the inter-relationships with psychiatry. There is a separate chapter making some of the connections but it seems rather inadequate. Again one could argue that knowledge of the other sciences relating to psychiatry would also be better gained by references to independent texts on each subject in spite of the comments of the consulting editor that "many of the chapters on the basic sciences are truly outstanding". There are some very good contributions in clinical psychiatry on schizophrenia and affective disorder and some poor ones, for instance on puerperal illness, suicide and thanatology. The psychiatry of old age is accorded a

mere seven pages.

The laudable aim of reducing the size of this fourth edition (from 4,000 to just over 2,000 pages), although it makes this book slightly easier to handle, may have resulted in some loss of quality. For example, the third edition contains a clear account of existential psychotherapy whereas the briefer account in the fourth edition is almost incomprehensible. The chapter on suicide in the third edition includes a discussion of parasuicide and of the assessment of suicidal risk which I cannot find in the fourth edition. Earlier editions contained comprehensive lists of references; now only a few key ones are included, perhaps reducing its usefulness to those who are interested in the development of thinking on a particular topic.

Comprehensive textbooks have always been attractive and give the insecure student a sense of reassurance that all he needs to know is within those covers. The issuing of two reprints of the third edition and publication of a fourth must indicate the enterprise's popularity in the USA. On this side of the Atlantic similar sorts of books are appearing, but they tend to be more limited in scope and to deal separately with the basic sciences and the clinical psychiatry required for the Membership examination. Their smaller size tends to make effective editing possible and the books are much easier to handle, but the overall cost to students may be more. This book would not be adequate for post-graduate students in this country, but gives useful insights into psychiatric practice in the USA. Because of this it might be a useful volume to include in the libraries of academic departments. It would be an inappropriate but dangerously attractive purchase for hospital libraries. For most students in this country, reference to one of the similar but less "comprehensive" volumes would provide a useful basis from which to read more widely.

ISOBEL R CARD

Theory and Treatment of Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia: Biomedical, Sociocultural, and Psychological Perspectives. Edited by Rev Steven W Emmett. (Pp 420; \$41.00.) New York: Brunner/Mazel Inc. Outside North America: Raven Press, 1985.

Despite the rather unusual credentials of the editor (psychotherapist and church minister), this 420 page volume provides a reasonably balanced view of the theory and treatment of anorexia nervosa and bulimia. Contributors include physicians, psychiatrists, psychotherapists, sociologists,